

ON LIFE AFTER DEATH

PECHNER





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ON LIFE AFTER DEATH



Prof. G. W. Benson.

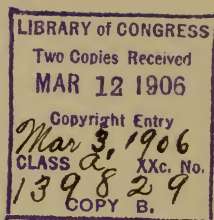
ON
LIFE AFTER DEATH

FROM THE GERMAN
OF
GUSTAV THEODOR FECHNER

BY
DR. HUGO WERNEKKE
Head Master of Weimar Realgymnasium

A New Edition Revised and Enlarged

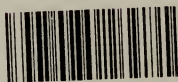
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TO
THE MEMORY OF
THE REVERED AUTHOR,
WHO ON HIS EIGHTIETH BIRTHDAY KINDLY
ACCEPTED THE FIRST ENGLISH VERSION OF
THE PRESENT LITTLE BOOK
ON LIFE AFTER DEATH
FROM
The Translator.

. . . El nacer
Y el morir son parecidos.”
La vida es sueño: I. 678.

TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE.

FECHNER'S famous essay, *Das Büchlein vom Leben nach dem Tode*, which in this present shape¹ hopes to be made welcome to the English-reading public, came out originally in 1835. But in the age of romanticism, strange to say, it seems to have met with little more favor than in the ensuing period of materialism, when Büchner and Moleschott proclaimed a creed attainable without much mental effort. A second edition, therefore, slightly altered,² was not undertaken till 1866. A

¹ It is a revision of our first edition, published in 1882 by Sampson Low, Marston, Searle & Rivington, London. While this new edition was in preparation, another translation came out in the United States, by Maria C. Wadsworth (Boston 1905).

² The alterations, throughout in the shape of omissions, are slight in extent, but characteristic of the author's mental development. He thought it advisable to suppress certain passages, in which his philo-

third edition, in 1887, bore witness, on the one hand, that the new generation had begun to appreciate the booklet, and on the other hand, that its author, with his mind constantly fixed on the highest problems of moral and natural philosophy, still upheld the views set forth in one of his earliest publications. A fourth and a fifth reprint came out, after his death, in 1900 and 1903.

It was a long and laborious life, though outwardly uneventful, which closed on November 18th, 1887. Gustav Theodor Fechner was born, on April 19th, 1801, at Gross-Särchen, a small village in the Oberlausitz, which at present belongs to the Prussian province of Silesia, whereas in the beginning of the last century it was under the Elector of Saxony. Hence it was at the ancient Saxon university, in Leipzig, that Fechner went through his course of studies, and where in 1834 he was appointed pro-

sophic imagination might be considered to have taken too daring a flight. They will be found, with a reference to their original place in his deductions, at the end of this translation.

fessor of physics. His sphere of activity was not confined to the delivering of public lectures. He wrote, and translated from the French, science textbooks, and conducted several magazines of a scientific character. The observations preparatory to his publications on galvanism and electro-magnetism proved injurious to his eyesight, so that for some time he was obliged to give up all writing and lecturing. It was, however, so far restored as to enable him to labor for many successive years in the fields of scientific investigation and philosophical and metaphysical speculation.

His standard work *Elemente der Psychophysik* was published in 1859 (with important additions issued in 1877 and 1882). Slowly, at least in the beginning, but steadily and very honorably, it has made its way among men of science, at home and abroad. Fechner's Law, the fundamental law of psychophysics (stating that sensation varies in the ratio of the logarithm of impression) has become a term of international currency.

“It will never be forgotten,” says Wundt,³ “that Fechner was the first to introduce exact methods, exact principles of measurement and experimental observation for the investigation of psychic phenomena, and thereby to open the prospect of a psychological science, in the strict sense of the word. When Herbart had a similar aim in view, he failed to find the way towards it. The chief merit of Fechner’s method is this: that it has nothing to apprehend from the vicissitudes of philosophical systems. Modern psychology has indeed assumed a really scientific character, and may keep aloof from all metaphysical controversy.”

If among the divers branches of psychology, æsthetics seemed least of all susceptible of scientific treatment, it was Fechner again, who attempted, and successfully attempted, an *Introduction to Æsthetics* (*Vorschule der Æsthetik*, 1876), based on experiment and analysis. He modestly

³ *Gustav Theodor Fechner. Rede zur Feier seines hundertjährigen Geburtstags gehalten von Wilhelm Wundt. Leipzig 1901.*

speaks of it as a "rhapsodic" discussion of various questions, but he clearly shows the way to solve the proposed problems — not on the basis of *a priori* principles, by the descending process or the way "from above," as he likes to describe it, but by observation and induction, by the ascending process, the way "from below." He dwells upon the connection of the problems on hand with the more general investigation of the causes of pleasure. Beginning with pleasing objects of the simplest description (geometrical figures, for instance), and proceeding to analyze works of art, he finds out experimentally what it is that makes things pleasant or unpleasant, and formulates the principles of æsthetic pleasure.

The long and varied list of Fechner's publications, in the shape of detached essays, pamphlets and greater works, opens with the writings of "Dr. Mises"—such as *A Demonstration that the Moon is made of Iodine*, *A Panegyric of the Medical Art of the Present Time*, *Four Paradoxes*,⁴ *Stape-*

⁴The Paradoxes dexterously proved by Dr. Mises

lia Mixta,⁵ and at the first sight it may seem hard to realize the identity of Dr. Mises, with his sometimes exuberantly fantastic humor, and Professor Fechner, the scientist and philosopher. And yet the sympathetic reader will understand how the one could develop into the other. There is similarity of style between them, and there is, strange as it may sound, relationship of subject. The *Anatomy of Angels*, for instance, which are these, That the shadow is a living being; That space has four dimensions; That witchcraft is a reality; That the world was made not by a creative but by a destructive principle.

⁵The whimsical choice of this title is thus facetiously explained by the author: "I was anxious to follow the fashion with my little book, sending it out under the name of some flower. But finding that the recent publications were adorned with the names of almost all the children of Flora which I knew, I was rather at a loss, till a *Stapelia mixta*, placed outside my window, caught my eye, a flower of a somewhat sombre color, dotted with glaring bright specks, and exhaling an odor, that the carrion-flies will lay their eggs on it by mistake. As little as a Christian, I said to myself, will ever call his baby Judas Iscariot, as little can a fashionable author have called his book after that flower. And so my hesitation was removed."

reads very like a fairy-tale, turns out to be a humorous prelude to the fundamental conception of the planet-world, on which the first part of his *Zend-Avesta* is based. Originally the *Booklet on Life after Death*, dedicated to two young ladies, the daughters of Fechner's friend Grimmer, a Leipzig bookseller, also bore the name of Dr. Mises. Here, however, the author is quite grave. The subject of the second part of *Zend-Avesta* (which did not appear till 16 years afterwards) is here previously sketched, with a forcible eloquence and great warmth of feeling. The author confines himself to stating his ideas, the dogmatic tone is prevalent, the reasoning by analogy, a peculiar modification of the inductive method, which is the characteristic feature of his later works, is less obvious here.

Another little book of a preliminary character, on the *Summum Bonum* (*Über das höchste Gut*, 1846) briefly stating the ethical principles more fully expounded in *Zend-Avesta*, was followed, in 1848, by an elaborate discussion of what Fechner terms

“the Soul-Question”—the problem of the soul. In *Nanna, or the Soul-Life of Plants*, he upholds that the same reasons which cause us to assume the existence of a mind or soul⁶ in the bodies of man and of animals, viz.: the evident design in their bodily organization, the helpful interaction of their organs, the reaction upon, and adaptation to, outward conditions, must induce us to assume that there is a soul in plants as well. From the tenet that the organized beings inferior to man must have a soul, or rather do not consist of a body and soul, but are body and soul *in one*, like man himself, he proceeded to the higher and grander conception, that the beings superior to man, the celestial bodies, must likewise have an inward life, underlying, or concomitant with, their outward life—that, in fact, the whole universe is alive, not a dead bulk, but

⁶ It may be as well to state here that Fechner, with his skill in minute research and his mastery of language, has little taste for certain subtleties of terminology, so that in his writings, as in our translation, the terms *mind*, *soul*, *spirit*, are used with very little difference of meaning.

an animated being, a wonderful organism of the sublimest order. This grand doctrine was ingeniously and eloquently set forth in *Zend-Avesta, or the Things of Heaven and the Hereafter* (*Zend-Avesta, oder über die Dinge des Himmels und des Jenseits*), published in 1851, in three volumes, of which the first and second contain his ideas on the relation of human life to divine life and the life of the universe, whereas the subject of the third is the relation of our present life to the life to come. He sums up his ideas in the following paragraphs:

Syllabus of the Theory of Heavenly Things.
(*Zend-Avesta*, Chap. XX.)

I. According to a quite justified, though not exactly current view, the earth — comprising in the term water, air, animals, plants, in short, everything that by the force of attraction is retained on it — represents, in the same way as the human body, a system based on the continuity of substance and closely held together by mutual and purposeful interaction, made up of a variety of parts and subordinate systems, and

going through, in never-ending evolution, a variety of periodical and cyclical motions, of which general system of parts and motions the human body constitutes an inferior system.

2. Examining the various points of resemblance as well as of difference between man and earth, we discover on the one hand an agreement between them in every point which in any theory of the relation between body and soul has been established as characteristic of a spiritual individuality connected with a material organism, whereas their undeniable differences make it evident that the earth is an individuality of higher and more independent life than man's lower and more restrained life.

3. As our bodies belong to the greater and higher individual body of the earth, so our spirits belong to the greater and higher individual spirit of the earth, which comprises all the spirits of earthly creatures, very much as the earth-body comprises their bodies. At the same time the earth-spirit is not a mere assembly of all the spirits of the earth, but a higher, individually conscious union of them. Our own individuality and independence, which are naturally but of a relative character, are not impaired but conditioned by this union. If any meaning is to be connected with the term in current use, when we speak of a "spirit of mankind," we must identify it with the spirit of the earth.

4. Considering that the earth is one of the celestial bodies, and reasoning again from analogy, we are led to view those bodies, the stars, as endowed with an individual spirit each, and thus forming a realm of another and higher order of beings, in which we may indeed discover such characteristics as we have reason to ascribe to beings of a higher order than ours. This view of ours coincides with the belief of many human races, which at all times, as long as they were in close contact with nature, looked upon the hosts of heaven as divine beings—and wherein our own popular belief in angels has its roots.

5. As all the stars, considered materially, belong to the material universe, so all the spirits of stars belong to the spirit of the universe, i. e., the divine spirit. At the same time their own individuality and independence is as little impaired by this circumstance as our own spirits are by their connection with the earth-spirit: it is their common link, their highest conscious union.

6. The divine spirit is one, omniscient and truly all-conscious, i. e., holding all the consciousness of the universe and thus comprising each individual consciousness of his creatures in a higher and the highest connection.

7. As the earth, far from separating our bodies from the universe, connects and incorporates us

with the universe, so the spirit of the earth, far from separating our spirits from the divine spirit, forms a higher individual connection of every earthly spirit with the spirit of the universe. This circumstance does not abolish the blessed fact that we have in Christ the highest mediator between God and man.

Syllabus of the Theory of the Hereafter.
(Zend-Avesta, Chap. XXXI.)

1. When a man dies, his spirit will not be absorbed in the greater and higher spirit of which it was born to an individual existence; on the contrary, his relation to that spirit will become clear and conscious, and his whole spiritual property will appear in a higher light. By that higher spirit the earth-spirit as well as the divine spirit may be understood, as it is the spirit of the earth that connects us with God.

2. Our present life and our future life may aptly be compared to a life of *perceptions* and a life of *reminiscences*. Or we may say that the higher spirit to whom we belong will transfer us in death from his lower life, of perceptions, to his higher life, of reminiscences. As now we share his perception-life, without losing our individuality and relative independence, we shall share, in a like manner, his reminiscence-life.

3. The relation between the spirits of that

higher stage and those of our lower stage, which are connected into one spiritual realm, finds its analogy in the connection of our own spheres of reminiscences and perceptions. As our perceptions derive a higher significance from our reminiscences, and as our reminiscences are constantly influenced by our perceptions, which come to associate themselves with them, so do the spirits of the higher stage give a higher significance to our spiritual life and are in their turn influenced by ours; though at the same time they live their own higher and freer life, in their relations to each other and to the higher spirit.

4. As our reminiscences require a less sharply defined place in our brain than our perceptions, so are the spirits of the higher stage less closely tied to earthly substance, though they, like our reminiscences, cannot entirely do without it. Now the material foundation of our reminiscences, whatever it may be, grows from the material of our perceptions (the images of outward objects, for instance, produce effects in our brain, with which, when perception has ceased, reminiscence will be connected), so will the material existence connected with the spiritual life in the hereafter grow from our present existence.

5. Our future spheres of existence, though all incorporated in the same great body, the earth, will not disturb, confuse or efface each other. Even here our spheres of existence necessarily

cross and intersect each other, as the means of our mutual intercourse, which in the hereafter will only increase in intimacy, variety and consciousness; and in our brain the material changes connected with our reminiscences cross and intersect each other, leaving them nevertheless undisturbed and uneffaced.

6. As in our present life the body which at any period is the vehicle of our mind, has grown from the body which was its vehicle in a former period, so in our future life the material vehicle of our spiritual existence must have grown, to preserve our individuality, from the vehicle of our present spiritual existence. This condition is indeed realized in our individual sphere of actions, in the totality of which everything is stored up that during our present life has produced any effect in our body.

7. The extinction of our present life seems to be the condition for the transition of consciousness from its present sphere to the continuation of it. A similar antagonism is observable in the various spheres of our consciousness, as long as it is connected with, and therefore confined by, our narrower body.

8. The moral side of our view is this, that it explains how every man produces the conditions of a blessed or unblessed existence hereafter, in the consequences of his inward and outward acts during his present existence. The man who in

this life tried to understand the divine order of things and to act in accordance with it, doing what is good, within himself and in the world, will have the final salutary effects of it as a reward; the man whose thoughts and actions have been bad, who wrought evil in this world, will have to bear the consequences of it as a punishment — which consequences will increase on him till he turn from his evil way.

9. Our views are not in contradiction with the teachings of Christianity, from which after all they deviate only in some less essential points. Pointing out the real meaning of certain teachings, which are sometimes taken in a more or less figurative or symbolical sense, they may serve to fortify Christian conviction and promote Christian life.

The Author's Creed.

(Zend-Avesta, Chap. XXXII.)

1. I believe in one God, eternal, infinite, omnipresent, all-mighty, all-knowing, all-loving, all-just, all-merciful, through whom comes and goes and has its being whatever there comes and goes and is, who lives and moves and has his being in everything as everything in him; who knows everything that is known and can be known; who loves all his creatures in one as he loves himself; who does will what is good and does not will

what is evil; who in the course of time directs everything to its own good end; who is merciful even to the wicked, so as to make his very punishment the means of his improvement and final salvation.

2. I believe that God has bestowed certain parts or sides of his spiritual essence on individual creatures, this earth being one of them, filled with its own spirit, as a portion of the divine essence, which again, in an individual manner, fills all the individual creatures of the earth, so that all of us, human beings, animals and plants, are children of God from and in and through this spirit, though man alone enjoys the privilege, which involves a duty, of becoming conscious of his eternal father's will and of his own fellowship in a higher spiritual community.

3. I believe that Christ, son of God from and in and through the spirit that fills the earth as a portion of the divine essence, is not only one of us, but above us, as we are destined through his mediatorship to become children of God and attain a higher spiritual union than through our mere natural birth.

4. I believe that there is nothing either unnatural or supernatural in God's universal order and dispensation, though there may result uncommon and unexampled effects from uncommon and unexampled causes, so that in the whole of Christ's life and work there was nothing un-

natural or supernatural, only that he was the cause, such as never had been nor ever will be again, of effects that never had been but will remain and go on growing forever.

5. I believe, that the one right way to the salvation of mankind is by true love of God and of one's neighbor, truly practised as it has been commanded by Christ, and that cherishing this love and practising it is the one thing whereby in a higher sense we shall be made of one spirit.

6. I believe that the teaching and community of Christ will not decrease, but increase, so that one day every human being shall belong to it; even what is not given in this life, shall be given hereafter.

7. I believe that the community or church of Christ is the body that is forever filled with his spirit, and that the teaching of Christ, duly preached, read, interpreted, received and acted upon, with baptism and eucharist duly administered and received, are the principal means of keeping Christ's spirit alive in his community or church and of incorporating, strengthening and preserving its members.

8. I believe in a resurrection and an eternal life of man, as a consequence and continuation of his present life, whereof we have an example in Christ, our present body and life being only a small seedcorn of a freer and more refined body and life, which shall be ours, when our spirit is

to live in a house not made by hands, which will last forever, in heaven, where everything shall be made known that now is hidden from us, and where we shall see clearly, what now we see in part, as in a glass, darkly, and where those that are here spiritually united in and through Christ, shall see him and each other face to face. I believe that this fleeting present life is a preparatory stage to eternal life, and that everyone in his good or evil intentions, his good or evil deeds, produces the conditions of his future life, that his works shall follow him and that he will reap what he has sown.

9. I believe that the purport of the divine commandments is not to spoil man's pleasure and happiness, but to regulate and direct his will and his doings to the purpose of promoting the greatest possible happiness of them all. I believe that to will and do according to this purpose is the duty of man, and that thereby he will be in accordance with God's commandments, even in cases when there is no express commandment.

10. I believe that the consequences of evil actions are such that in the course of time they will bring about their own punishment, and those of good actions, finally to bring about their own reward. I believe that the consequences of this life will extend to the hereafter, where such justice will be fully administered as was only begun or postponed here. I believe that the

punishment of the wicked and the reward of the good, when longer postponed, will finally come on the more decidedly, and will continue to increase till the bad man shall have been compelled to mend his way, and till the good man shall have given himself up completely to the divine mercy. I believe that the free will of man may alter the way towards that end, but not the end itself. I believe that this is not the working of a lifeless order of things, but that this order is due to the indwelling of the divine spirit.

Fechner's next work, *Professor Schleiden und der Mond* (1856) was more than an apology of his *Nanna*; it was a new attempt, repeated in the books *On the Soul-Question* (1861) and *The Three Motives and Arguments of Belief* (*Die drei Motive und Gründe des Glaubens*, 1863), to rouse the world from its materialistic slumber — a task which he was well aware would require “a good deal of breath.” When Darwin's views began to attract universal attention, Fechner, with a wonderful sagacity and a comprehensiveness of mind certainly not frequent in a man of his age, assimilated them into his own system, giving them a

new foundation, and at the same time deriving from them a new support to his own theories. This was done in his treatise — *Some Ideas on the Creation and Evolution of Organisms* (*Einige Ideen zur Schöpfung, und Entwicklungsgeschichte der Organismen* — 1873). In *The Daylight-View versus the Night-View* (*Die Tagesansicht gegenüber der Nachtansicht* — 1879) he gave a new exposition and apology of his metaphysical system, the subject being essentially the same as in *Zend-Avesta*, rearranged and condensed. It appears from this and from some minor publications of his latter years, that to the end of his life Fechner's efforts lay invariably in the same direction, attempting to bring about a reconciliation, so much needed in our days, of science and religion, by looking not at one side of the universe only, but diligently examining it in its two aspects, the material and the spiritual. The scientist still seems little inclined to approach the latter; his habits of thought will not permit him to enter upon such discussions. On the other

hand, it seems only natural, as Wundt says, that "the adherents of modern mysticism should have claimed Fechner as one of their own." Baron Reichenbach, the discoverer of Od, engaged his interest, "almost by violence," till Fechner yielded to attend some of his experiments. In 1877, when Henry Slade was in Germany, Fechner received many an invitation to join spiritistic séances. Professor Zöllner was his friend, and he could not refuse to be present, with W. Weber, the physicist, and Scheibner, the mathematician, during the experiments with Slade, which Zöllner afterwards described in such an enthusiastic tone of conviction that most of his previous admirers began to doubt of his sanity of mind. Fechner speaks of them with great reserve. He does not undertake to deny from the outset the possibility of the so-called spiritistic phenomena, but he yields with reluctance to the empirical reasons for acknowledging their reality. His daylight-view can exist with or without spiritism, but he would prefer to do without it. "For though the two views

coincide in some material points, so that our view may find and to some degree does find a support in spiritism, the character of its abnormal phenomena is inconvenient and prejudicial to the quiet progress of reasoning." At the same time he confesses "that, to be insensible to the amount and weight of evidence in favor of spiritistic phenomena, would be equivalent to contempt of experimental science. If spiritism be preposterous, the means commonly adopted to refute it are still more preposterous. On other occasions inferences are drawn from successful experiments, neglecting those that were unsuccessful; in the case of spiritism, however, its adversaries draw their inferences entirely from unsuccessful experiments, rejecting those that were successful. On other occasions the investigator of a new field of experience makes it his object to find out the conditions for successful experiment; in the present case the conditions are all made *a priori*. If an experiment made in the dark or with insufficient light be successful, it counts for nothing, because

the result was not obtained by daylight; but if it is successful under more favorable conditions, by daylight, it counts again for nothing, owing to the nature of the result." Fechner makes this remark, as he declares, "not from sympathy with spiritism, but from a sense of justice due to the subject and the persons; for even though one should like to get rid of spiritism at any expense, it ought not to be done at the expense of truth."

The considerate way in which Fechner, with a truly philosophical attitude, expresses his opinion in this case, and which in fact never seems to leave him in his researches, is certainly apt to secure to his views a more than transitory appreciation.

H. W.

WEIMAR, 1905,
On Fechner's Birthday.

CHAPTER I.

MAN lives on earth not once, but three times: the first stage of his life is continual sleep; the second, sleeping and waking by turns; the third, waking for ever.

In the first stage man lives in the dark, alone; in the second, he lives associated with, yet separated from, his fellow-men, in a light reflected from the surface of things; in the third, his life, interwoven with the life of other spirits, is a higher life in the Highest of spirits, with the power of looking to the bottom of finite things.

In the first stage his body develops itself from its germ, working out organs for the second; in the second stage his mind develops itself from its germ, working out organs for the third; in the third the divine germ develops itself, which lies hidden in

every human mind, to direct him, through instinct, through feeling and believing, to the world beyond, which seems so dark at present, but shall be light as day hereafter.

The act of leaving the first stage for the second we call Birth; that of leaving the second for the third, Death. Our way from the second to the third is not darker than our way from the first to the second: one way leads us forth to see the world outwardly; the other, to see it inwardly.

The infant, in the first stage, is blind and deaf to all the light and all the music of the second stage, and having to leave its mother's womb is hard and painful, and at a certain moment of its birth the dissolution of its former life must be like death to it, before it awakens to its new existence. In the same way we, in our present life, with all our consciousness bound up within this narrow body, know nothing of the light, the music, the freedom, and the glory of the life to come, and often feel inclined to look upon the dark and narrow passage which leads towards it, as a little lane with "no thorough-

fare" to it. Whereas death is merely a second birth into a happier life, when the spirit, breaking through its narrow hull, leaves it to decay and vanish, like the infant's hull in its first birth. And then all those things which we, with our present senses, can only know from the outside, or, as it were, from a distance, will be penetrated into, and thoroughly known, by us. Then, instead of passing by hills and meadows, instead of seeing around us all the beauties of spring, and grieving that we cannot really take them in, as they are merely external: our spirits shall enter into those hills and meadows, to feel and enjoy with them their strength and their pleasure in growing; instead of exerting ourselves to produce, by means of words or gestures, certain ideas in the minds of our fellow-men, we shall be enabled to elevate and influence their thoughts, by an immediate intercourse of spirits, which are no longer separated, but rather brought together, by their bodies; instead of being visible in our bodily shape to the eyes of the friends we

left behind, we shall dwell in their inmost souls, a part of them, thinking and acting in them and through them.

CHAPTER II.

THE infant, when in its mother's womb, has merely a body-spirit — the Formative Principle. Its actions are limited to growing, to producing and developing its several limbs and organs. It does not feel them as its own property, it does not use them, nor is it able to use them. A beautiful eye, a beautiful mouth are merely beautiful objects to the infant; it has produced them without being aware that one day they shall be useful parts of its own self. They are made for a world to come whereof it knows nothing, fashioned through some mysterious impulse, the origin of which must be traced back to the organization of its mother.¹ As soon, however,

¹ For the physiologist I would express it more distinctly, thus. The formative principle of the infant lies, before its birth, not in those parts which are to

as the infant, matured for the second stage of life, leaves its primary organs behind, it grows self-conscious, feels itself an independent unity of all its self-created organs: the eye, the ear, the mouth henceforth are its own; and having produced them through some innate impulse, unconsciously, it now learns to use them, rejoicing in its strength; a world of light, of colors, sounds, odors, tastes, reveals itself through the organs produced for those purposes.

Now, the relation of the first stage of life to the second will recur, in a climax, in the relation of the second stage to the third. In a way similar to the one just alluded to, all our volitions and actions in this world are intended to produce an organism, which in the world to come we shall perceive and use as our own new Self. All the mental influences, all the results due to the actions continue living after its birth, but rather in those which, in birth, must be left behind and decay, as the body of man decays in death (*placenta cum funiculo umbilicali, velamentis ovi, eorumque liquoribus*); thus the human being, born into the world, grows out of the infant's activity, as a continuation of it.

of a person in his lifetime, which spread all over mankind and all over the earth, are, even at present, bound up together by a mysterious, invisible bond, thus forming a person's spiritual organs, fashioned during his life and combined into a spiritual body, an organism of continually active powers and effects, of which, though indissolubly connected with his present existence, he has at present no consciousness.

In the moment of death, however, when man has to part with those organs in which his powers of acting lay, he will, all at once, become conscious of all the ideas and effects which, produced by his manifold actions in life, will continue living and working in this world, and will form, as an organic offspring of an individual stem, an organic individuality which only then becomes alive, self-conscious, self-active, ready to act through the human and natural world, of its own will and power.

Whatever a person contributes, in his life, towards creating, transforming, or preserving the ideas pervading the human and nat-

ural world, is his own imperishable portion, able to act for itself in the third stage of life, though the body to which, during the second stage, it was inherent, be long since decayed. The thoughts and actions of so many millions that are gone, are not gone with them, neither shall they be obliterated by the thoughts and actions of the many millions that are to come after them; in them and with them they shall grow, and act, and impel them towards one great aim unseen by themselves.

We are inclined to look upon this ideal continuation of our lives as a mere abstraction, and to consider the continued influence which the spirits of the dead exercise on the minds of the living as an idle fantasy. So it seems to us, because we lack the appropriate senses wherewith to perceive the spirits of the third stage, in their real existence, pervading the depths of the Universe: we only perceive the ties which unite their existence with our own, viz.: those very ideas which they left behind for us to share with them. The circle of waves which a falling stone

produces on a surface of water calls forth other circles round every rock rising above the surface within its reach; for all that it remains one continual circle, producing and encircling all the rest, whereas the rocks perceive it, so to speak, only in part, as a fragment. We are such rocks ourselves, unconscious of the encircling waves, though, unlike those fixed objects, we produce, every one of us, a continual circle of actions all around us, encircling and crossing those produced by our fellow-men.

In fact, every person, in his lifetime, takes hold of, and grows into the minds of others, by his words and works, spoken, written, or acted.

While Goethe was still alive, thousands of contemporaries bore within them some sparks from the light of his genius, which afterwards kindled up into new light. While Napoleon was still alive, his powerful genius exercised its influence on the whole generation almost; and when the one and the other died, the germs which had fallen into other minds, did not die with them, they

grew, and developed themselves, constituting in their total an individual being, as their origin had been from an individual. And these new individual beings we must assume to be provided, though in a manner incomprehensible to us, with self-consciousness, as well in their present state as they were before. Goethe, Schiller, Napoleon, Luther, are still alive among us, self-conscious individuals thinking and acting with us, in a higher state of development now, no longer bound up within a narrow body, but pervading the world which they in their lifetime instructed, edified, delighted, ruled, and producing effects even far surpassing those of which we are generally aware.

The most striking instance of a great spirit living and working on through the ages we see in Christ. You must not think it an empty saying, that He liveth in those who believe in Him. Every true Christian carries Him within him, not in a symbolical meaning, but in life and reality; every one that thinks and acts according to His mind is a partaker in Him; for it is the spirit of

Christ that causes in him such thinking and acting. He is diffused through all the members of His body, the Church, and they are all united through His spirit, like apples clinging to a tree, or branches attached to a vine: "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ." (1 Cor. xii. 12.)

And like those great and this Greatest of spirits, every true worker shall waken in the world to come with an individuality, an organism of his own making, comprising thousands of effects and productions, filling a narrower or wider sphere, endowed with more or less power of growth and development, even as their spirits in this life moved more or less actively in their spheres of labor. The man that has been grovelling on the ground, employing his mental faculties only in moving, feeding, pampering his body, will become a very insignificant being hereafter. The richest will then be the poorest, if he has only used his money that he may not have to use his powers, and the

poorest may turn out the richest, if he has used his powers to do his duty in this world. For whatever a man uses and puts out at present will be his own hereafter; but the pound that was kept and laid up in a napkin will be taken away entirely.

The mysteriousness of our present inward life, the thirst after truth, which sometimes is of but little avail here below, the desire of every honest mind to work for the good of posterity, the sense of regret and trouble of mind caused by the consciousness of a wicked deed, even though unaccompanied by present disadvantages, all such phenomena arise from a dim presentiment of what our fate will be hereafter, when we shall reap the fruit of our slightest and most secret acts.

Behold in this the wonderful justice of the Universe, leaving it to every being to prepare for himself the conditions of his future existence. There are no outward rewards and punishments for our actions, there is no heaven or hell — in the popular meaning of the word, with Christians, Jews, and Gen-

tiles — for the spirits of the dead to ascend or descend to, by a leap as it were; but there is no dead stop either, no absorption of the soul into the universe: the spirit of man has to go through his great climacteric disease, death; after which his development will continue, in and for a higher life on this earth of ours. The foundations of that higher development, in accordance with the laws of creation, must be sought for on a lower stage; and according as a man, in this life, has been good or bad, has acted nobly or meanly, worked hard or neglected his work, he will find, in after-life, an organism of his own, healthy or unhealthy, beautiful or hateful, strong or weak; his self-chosen way of acting in this world will determine his relation to other spirits, his faculties and talents, his whole destiny during his development in that other world.

“Let us then be up and doing!” For he who walks at a slow pace here will be lame there; he who opens not his eyes here will be weak-sighted there; who practises deceit and wickedness will feel at variance with all

the good and faithful spirits, and that feeling will be so painful in him as to impel him even in the other world, to amend the evil he did in this world; nor will he find rest and peace until his least and last offence be repented and atoned for. When other spirits rest in peace with God, partaking of His thoughts, the wicked ones will go about restless, through the sorrows and changes of earthly life, and their spiritual disorder will infect other men with error and superstition, with folly and vice; and while they, in the third world, lag behind on the way towards perfection, they will keep back those in whom they live, on their way from the second world to the third.

Hence, meanness, wickedness, untruth, may hold their sway for a time against generosity, honesty, godliness; but in the end they will be overcome by the increasing power of the good, they will be brought to nought through their own deeds, by the increasing evil consequent thereon, and nothing shall remain in any man's spirit that is false and vile and impure; only what is true,

good, and beautiful, is to be our eternal, imperishable portion, of which if there be but a mustard-seed in any of us (and there can be no human being utterly destitute of it), all dross and chaff which are yet around it will be consumed in the purging fire of our third life, a fire of torment for the wicked only — and in the end, be it ever so late, it will grow up into a noble tree.

And you, too, rejoice, whose spirit is being tried and refined here below by grief and suffering. You are only learning to be patient and persevering in removing every obstacle which would hinder your progress, and on being born into a higher life will find yourself the better enabled to make up for all it has been your lot on earth to leave undone.

CHAPTER III.

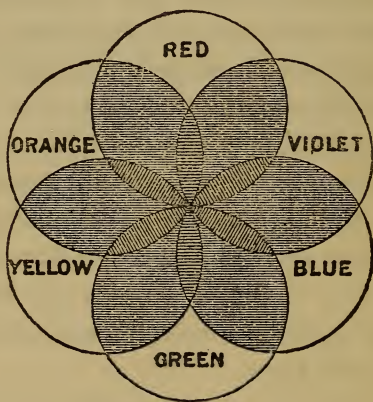
MAN uses many means to obtain one end, God makes one means serve many ends.

The plant thinks it is here merely for its own sake, intended to grow, to toss in the wind, to drink in light and air, to prepare colors and odors as an ornament for itself, to play with bees and butterflies. And it is here for itself, no doubt, but for the earth as well, a tiny organ of the earth for light, air, and water, to meet there and work together for the benefit of the whole terrestrial system; it is intended to breathe for the earth, to make a verdant garment for the earth, to prepare food, raiment, and fuel, for man and beast.

Man thinks he is here merely for his own sake, intended to enjoy himself, to toil and labor for his growth in body and mind.

And he is here for himself, no doubt; but his body is a dwelling-place for higher spirits as well, to enter into, to commune and work together there, and thus to direct his mind to think and feel in various ways, and help him to be fit for the life to come.

Man's mind is therefore, simultaneously, his own property, and the property of those higher spirits; and whatever comes to pass in it, equally belongs to both sides, only in a different sense and manner.



Thus, in our diagram, the many-colored star in the middle stands for itself, an independent individual figure, whose several

rays shoot from, and are kept together by a common centre; and again that same star appears to be formed by the six single-colored circles, each of which is again an independent individual figure, so that every ray belongs to the central star as well as to the intersecting circles. Behold in this not a likeness, but a symbol, of the human soul.

We often wonder whence such a thought came into our minds. Some longing, or some melancholy, or happy mood will come over us we know not how or why. An inward voice persuades us to act, or exhorts us to forbear acting, though all the time we are not conscious of any motive of our own tending one way or other. This is the influence of spirits entering into us, thinking and acting in us from centres different from our own. Such influence is still more striking in certain abnormal conditions of the mind—in clairvoyance or mental disorder—when the relation of mutual dependence has been decided in *their* favor, making us entirely passive under their influence, without any reaction on our own part. As long,

however, as our mind is awake and healthy it cannot become a mere plaything, without a will of its own, of the spirits that have grown into it and become a living part of it. For such a healthy human mind is an invisible life-centre of spiritual attraction, a connecting link for divers spirits, who are thus enabled to hold communion with each other, and to engender thoughts within us. They do not, however, create the mind, which is the inborn property of each individual person, with free-will, self-determination, self-consciousness, reasoning power, and all other mental faculties comprised therein. At the time of our birth, it is true, all these faculties are folded up as in a germ, looking forward to being developed into an organism of individual life and reality. Now, upon our entering this life those spirits draw near on all sides, trying to make use of our faculties for themselves, in order to increase their own sphere of activity, in a certain direction, and if they succeed in doing so, a new impulse in that same direction is given to our own mind in its development.

Those ingrown spirits, in their turn, are subject, though in a different way, to the influence of the human will. They influence and direct a man's mind, they also receive new impressions from the store of his spiritual life. In a mind harmoniously developed, none of these influences has the mastery over the others. For every concomitant spirit shares only a certain part of his own self with one individual person; hence the will of that person can exercise only a limited influence on him whose sphere lies for the greater part without him; and as every human mind forms a rallying-point for many spirits, it can only be liable to a limited influence from each of them. If a man, however, of his own choice would submit entirely to be guided by them, he would lose his control over their influences.

There are spirits opposed to each other, so that their presence in the same human mind is incompatible; therefore the good and the evil spirits, the true and the false, dispute with each other the possession of our souls. The inward strife which so fre-

quently we experience is just such a struggle of spirits trying to take possession of our will, our reason, in short, our whole inward life. As a person feels the agreement of the spirits within him, in peace, quiet, and harmony of his own self, he also feels their strife, in inward trouble, confusion, doubt and despondency. But man need not become an inert and restless prey for the stronger spirits in that combat; he stands, with his own active powers, in the midst of the contending elements each of which tries to draw him to itself; he may, in such strife, side with and help what party he chooses, and may thus decide the victory even in favor of the weaker side, adding his own strength to that of the spirit against the stronger ones. Thus his individuality, his own self, will remain unendangered as long as he preserves his inborn strength and freedom, nor tires of using them. If, nevertheless, he is led on by evil spirits, it is from the difficulty he may find in using his own inward strength; and so, to become bad, it is enough to be careless and lazy.

The better a man's character is, the more easy it will be for him to become still better; and the worse he is, the more easily he will be utterly ruined. For a good man has received many good spirits within himself, who, uniting their powers with his, will save him some effort in getting rid of the evil spirits that have remained in him or approach him. Therefore, doing good does not weary a good man; he has his good spirits to help him, whereas a wicked man, to follow any good intentions he may have formed, must first overcome, by his own efforts, the evil spirits that resist his intentions.

Besides, kindred spirits will find, and associate with, each other, fleeing from contrary ones, if not forced to stay. The good spirits within us call other good spirits around us, and the evil spirits within us attract the evil ones. Pure spirits rejoice to come and live in a pure mind, but outward evil takes hold of the evil within us. If good spirits in increasing numbers take their abode in our soul, the last devil that had

lingered there will soon flee away, they are no fit company for him; and thus the soul of the good man becomes a pure heavenly dwelling for blessed spirits, abiding there in sweet company. But even good spirits when they see the impossibility of reclaiming a soul from the predominant evil ones, will desert it, and so it becomes a hell, a place full of the torment of the damned. For the pangs of conscience, and the trouble and restlessness in the minds of the wicked are torments not only felt by themselves, but by the evil spirits within them as well, even with more intensity.

CHAPTER IV.

THE higher spirits, living as they are not in an individual man, but each living and acting in many, are spiritual bonds between those persons, uniting them all in the same belief, the same truth, the same moral or political tendency. All the persons who have any spiritual fellowship between them, belong to the body of one spirit, and as co-ordinate members of it, work out the ideas which they have received from that spirit. Sometimes an idea lives at one time in a whole nation, a great number of people are moved to one great common enterprise. There is a mighty spirit coming over them all, penetrating them all. Such universal influences, however, are not only brought about by the spirits of the dead; also numberless new-born ideas of the living influence those living around them;

but all the ideas which a living person sends forth into the world are also elements and members of his future spiritual organism.

Now, wherever two kindred spirits meet on earth, growing into one through their common qualities, and influencing and enriching one another through their different qualities, the communities, nations, or generations, to which they formerly belonged individually, enter into spiritual communion as well, increasing thereby the mental stores and powers of each other. Thus the development of spiritual life in the third stage is closely connected with the development and progress of mankind. The gradual formation and growth of states, the progress of science and art, of commerce and trade, the development of all these spheres into larger and larger bodies harmoniously organized, is the consequence of numberless spirits living and moving among men and growing together into greater spiritual organisms.

How could it be possible for all those important spheres of life to take shape on great immutable principles, if they were to rely

on the confused selfish actions of individuals too short-sighted to see from the centre to the circumference, or from the circumference to the centre? How could it be possible, were not this activity influenced by higher spirits, who see clearly through the whole system, and, crowding round the common divine centre, and uniting their divine elements, direct men, between them, towards higher aims?

But as there is a harmony of spirits kindly meeting and helping each other, so is there also a conflict of spirits, in which all earthly and finite concerns must in the end destroy one another, leaving the things eternal to survive in their purity. Symptoms of this conflict may also be observed in the human world, in the antagonism of systems, the hatred of parties, the wars and revolutions between sovereigns and nations.

The majority of men stand amid these great spiritual movements, with blind faith, blind obedience, blind hatred and fury, neither hearing with their own ears nor seeing with their own eyes, but directed by

other spirits towards ends and aims of which they know nothing, allowing themselves to be led on through misery, slavery, and death, following the impulse of those higher spirits like a herd of cattle.

On the other side, there are men who, both acting and directing, influence the movement with clear consciousness and inward independence. But, after all, they are only voluntary means to great predestined ends, whose free actions may indeed determine the way and rate of the progress, but not its end and object. Those men who have accomplished great things in the world, were enabled to do so by their insight into the spiritual tendency of the period in which they lived, and they succeeded because they made their free acting and thinking agree with that tendency, while other men, perhaps just as great and sincere, failed, because they opposed that tendency. That first class of men were elected by the Spirit who knows which ways are best for which ends, to be new centres for his moving powers, not in the manner of blind tools, but

of living instruments serving his wisdom and justice, of their own free will and with their own powers of intellect. It is not the slave under the taskmaster that does the better work. And what they begin to work in the service of God beneath, they will continue hereafter, when they are partakers of His heavenly kingdom.

CHAPTER V.

ON many occasions when the spirits of the living and dead meet, they may both be unconscious of the meeting; or the consciousness may be on one side only — who is there that could follow or fathom such intercourse! So let it be understood that, whenever we speak of their meeting each other, we mean that they meet consciously, and whenever we speak of the presence of the dead, we mean that they are present consciously.

There is one means of meeting consciously for the living and the dead: it is the memory of the living for the dead. To direct our attention to the dead is to attract their attention towards us, just as an outward impression on a living person will direct his attention to the place where it acts upon him.

Our memory of the dead is indeed nothing but a consequence of their own conscious life beneath; a consequence brought to our consciousness; but their whole life in the hereafter is made up of the consequences of their present life.

Even when one living person thinks of another, it may cause some influence on his mind; but it is of no effect, as his consciousness is held within the bonds of his earthly frame. But consciousness set free by death seeks its own place, yielding to the influences exercised upon it the more easily and decidedly, the more easily and decidedly those influences have been exercised before.

A stroke in the physical world is always felt double, by him that strikes and by him that is struck: so a stroke of consciousness, produced by thinking of a dead person, is connected with a double sensation. It is a mistake to think of the share only which our present life has in that mental act, unmindful of the share of the life hereafter:

a mistake and neglect which cannot remain without their consequences.

If a lover has lost his beloved one, a husband his wife, a child its mother, it is in vain for them to look to distant heavens for the piece torn off their own lives, straining their eyes and stretching out their hands into vacancy for that which has never been really taken away from them; it is only the thread of bodily communication that is broken; the intercourse through their outer senses, whereby they both understood each other, has given way to an immediate connection through their inner senses, though they have not yet learned to understand it.

I saw a mother once looking anxiously about the house and garden for her own living child which all the time she was carrying in her arms. A greater mistake than hers is the mistake of her who will look for her dead child in some distant space, whereas it would suffice to look into her own self to find it. And if she does not find it there entire, was it entire, was it all her own, strictly speaking, while she car-

ried it in her arms? It is true, the advantages of outward intercourse, of outward words, looks, and care-taking are lost to both; the advantages of an inward intercourse have only begun now, if she would only recognize that there is such an inward intercourse and see the advantages it has. Nobody will speak to or shake hands with a person whom he supposes to be absent; but if you once know better, and have learned to see in a clearer light, there will be for you a new life of the living with their dead, and the dead will gain by this knowledge no less than the living.

If you think of a dead person earnestly and intensely, not only the thought of him or her, but the dead person himself will be in your mind immediately. You may inwardly conjure him, he must come to you; you may hold him, he must stay with you, if you only fix your thoughts upon him. Think of him in love or in hatred, he will be sure to feel it; think of him with strong love, with stronger hatred, he will feel it the more strongly. Up to this you have

had your memories of the dead, now you know the use of them; henceforth you will be able at will to make a dead person happy or miserable, through thinking of him, to reconcile yourself to him or quarrel with him, consciously for him as well as for yourself. Do so, then, but always for a good purpose, and take care that the memory which you leave behind one day may be to your own advantage.

Blessed the man who left behind him a store of love, of respect, and veneration, in the memory of men. What he left behind in his present life he will gain after death, acquiring a comprehensive consciousness of all that is thought of him by those who remain behind; he will thus carry home the bushel of which he had but single grains to count in his lifetime. Such are the treasures which we are bidden to lay up for heaven.

Woe to the man whom curses and execrations, a memory of terror, follow! What followed him in this life will overtake him in death: this is part of the hell that awaits

him. Each cry of misery that is sent after him will turn out a sharp arrow reaching him to pierce his very heart.

Full justice is done to every man: it consists in the totality of the consequences of both his good and evil actions. The good man who was misjudged here must suffer from that circumstance for some time, hereafter, as from an outward evil; and his false glory will follow the unjust man as an outward good; therefore, it will be well for you to keep your good name unsullied and not to hide your light under a bushel. But among the spirits hereafter there will be no misjudging; what was weighed amiss here will be set right above, and will be outweighed by an addition to the other side of the balance. Divine justice shall finally overcome all injustice of the earth.

Whatever wakens the memory of the dead is a means of calling them to our side. At every festival arranged to commemorate them, they rise; round every statue which we erect in their honor, they float; to every song celebrating their noble acts, they listen.

Here is a vital germ for a new phase of art! Art has grown so old, so tired of repeating old spectacles before the old lookers-on again and again; here is another tier of boxes opening, as it were, above the pit filled with the old spectators; now we know of a company of a higher class looking down from above, and the noblest object of art will be, henceforth, to please those above, no longer those below; but the people below ought to be pleased with that which is approved of above.

The scoffers go on scoffing and the churches continue quarreling — scoffing and quarrelling about a mystery which the scoffers say is repugnant to reason, and which the churches declare is above reason; for a greater secret has remained concealed from both parties, the opening of which removes at last, in a very simple and easy manner, the difficulty which has defied the reason of scoffers and disturbed the harmony of the churches; it is simply the greatest illustration of a universal law, wherein they would see an exception to and above all law. It

is not in a mere body of flour and water that Christ is received by the faithful partaker of His holy Supper. If you receive it in the thought of Him, He is with His thoughts not only near you, but within you; the more earnestly you think of Him the more closely He will unite Himself with you. But if you do not think of Him at all, you eat and drink nothing but common bread and common wine.

CHAPTER VI.

THE longing of every man to be, after his death, once more united with those he loved most dearly in this life, shall be fulfilled in a more perfect degree than you ever thought of or hoped for.

Those who were united in their life by a common spiritual element shall, in the hereafter, not only meet, but grow together, through that very element which shall become a mutual organ of their spirits, of which they both partake with equal consciousness. For even now the dead and the living, as well as the living among each other, are grown into one by numberless elements of that kind, elements which they have in common; but not till death has undone the bonds in which this frame of ours holds every soul of the living, will the union

of their consciousness be enhanced into a consciousness of their union. In the moment of death every one will realize the fact that what his mind received from those who died before him, never ceased to belong to their minds as well, and thus he will enter the third world not like a strange visitor, but like a long expected member of the family, who is welcomed home by all those with whom he was here united in the community of faith, of knowledge, or of love.

We shall also enter into close fellowship with the great spirits of those who lived, in their second stage of life, long before us, but whose great example and wisdom served to form our own minds. Thus he who lived here entirely in Christ will be entirely in Christ hereafter; nor is his individuality to be extinguished within a higher individuality; nay, he will be established, and receive new strength, and at the same time be able to strengthen others. For such spirits as are grown into one by their common elements must profit by each other's strength,

while, at the same time, they influence each other through their different elements. Some spirits will strengthen each other in many parts of their character, while others have only few points of coincidence and of mutual interest; some of these alliances brought about by the kindred elements in different spirits may be dissolved again, but those whose tendency is towards truth, virtue, and beauty will continue.

All things which have no elements of eternal harmony in them, though continuing beyond this life, must one day vanish away, thereby separating those spirits who for some time were united in an unworthy alliance working for no good.

Though the different elements of human spirits contain, for the greater part, some germ of the true, the beautiful, and the good, that germ is, in this life, covered up and encumbered with much that is trifling, corrupted, false, and wrong. The spirits united by such elements may, in after-life, either remain united or not: for they may either hold what is right and good, leaving

that which is wrong and wicked to the evil spirits whose company they shun; or some of them may keep the good, others the bad, elements.

On the other hand, spirits united by their mutual ownership of some element or idea of the true, the beautiful, or the good, in its eternal purity, will remain united by them for ever, sharing for ever the same spiritual property.

In the same measure, therefore, as the higher spirits comprehend the eternal ideas, they will grow together in larger spiritual organisms; and as the roots of all individual ideas are in general ideas, and theirs again in more general and universal ideas, so at last will all the spirits be united — in wonderful organization — with the greatest of spirits, with God.

Thus the spiritual world, in its perfection, is not a mere gathering together of spirits, but it may be likened to a living tree of spirits, with its roots in the earth and its crown reaching throughout the heavens.

Only the greatest and noblest spirits, as

Christ and His Saints, are able to reach, immediately, with the best part of their being, the inward height and greatness of God; the smaller and minor spirits take root in them as twigs in branches, and branches in trees, connected, through their mediation, with the highest essence of the most High.

Dead geniuses and saints are, therefore, the true mediators between God and men, partaking, on one side, of the ideas of God and communicating them to men, and feeling, on the other side, the joys and sufferings of mankind and communicating them to God.

In the very beginnings of religious life the worship of the dead was closely connected with the worship of deified nature; the savage races have retained the greater, the civilized races the higher part of those views, and there is no people or community that do not hold more or less of them as a chief article of faith. Therefore, every town ought to have a shrine for their own great dead, which might be built close by, or right within the temple of God, whereas

Christ alone ought to be always worshiped
in the same place with God Himself.

CHAPTER VII.

“Now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face; now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.” 1 Cor. xiii. 12.

MAN leads both an outward and an inward life in this world; the one visible and perceptible for every one in his looks, words, works, and deeds; the other perceptible only for himself in his thoughts and emotions. The continuation of the visible life into the world around may be easily traced, the continuation of the invisible life remains invisible, but is by no means wanting. For as man's inward life forms the centre of his present existence, its continuation will form the centre of his future existence.

Indeed, the effects which a person produces in a form visible and perceptible to the living, are not the only emanation from

him. However minute and gentle a vibration connected with some conscious movement within our mind may be—and all our mental acts are connected with, and accompanied by, such vibrations of our brain—it cannot vanish without producing continued processes of a similar nature, within ourselves, and, finally, around ourselves, though we are not able to trace them into the outer world. As little as the lute can keep its music to itself, so little can our brain. The music of sounds or of thoughts originates in the lute or in the brain, but does not stay there: it spreads beyond them.

What a wonderfully complicated play of vibrations of a higher order, originating in our brain, may be going on along with the coarser and lower play that strikes our eyes and ears, something like the most delicate ripple on the big waves of a lake, or the finely traced ornaments on the surface of a carpet, which receives its whole value and higher meaning from them. The man of science knows and studies the play of waves of a lower order only, little caring for

those of a higher order. He does not perceive them, but knowing the principle, he ought not to neglect the inferences that may be derived from it.¹

Therefore, the effects produced by human spirits are not limited to their continued influence upon us by means of their perceptible outer life in the present stage: along with this outer part there is in our nature another imperceptible inner part, even the essential part of the human being. Suppose a man to have lived and died in some desert island without any direct influence on other people's lives: he must continue in his individuality, in expectance of future

¹ Whether we attribute the action of the nerves to chemical or electrical processes, we either ascribe them to the vibrations of ultimate particles, or at least assume them to be evoked by or connected with them, though the imponderable substance may herein be of greater moment than the ponderable. Now vibrations can only *seem* to die out, in so far as they spread indefinitely in all directions; or, if dying out for a time, transformed into energy or tension, they are able to begin afresh, in some form or other, in accordance with the law of the conservation of energy.

development, having been unable to develop himself in this life through intercourse with his fellow-men. In the same way a child, which has been alive only for a moment, can never die again. The shortest moment of conscious life produces a circle of influences around it, just as the briefest tone that seems gone in a second, produces a similar circle, which carries the tone into endless space, far beyond the persons standing by to listen; for no action, or effect, is utterly destroyed, it goes on producing new effects of its kind for ever. Thus the mind of a child will develop itself from that one conscious moment, as well as the mind of that isolated man, but in a different way from what it would have done when beginning from a more developed state.

It is only in death that a man becomes fully conscious of all the influence he exercised on other men's minds; in the same way will he acquire only in death full possession and use of what he has fashioned within himself. What mental treasures he gathered in all his life, what fills his mem-

ory, what pervades his feelings, what his mind and fancy created, will remain his property for ever. The connection and interdependence of all these mental stores remains dark to us in this life. Thoughts will occasionally pass through this treasure-house, lighting up with their rays the little corner that lies on their way, and leaving the rest in obscurity. Our mind never realizes its inward fulness all at once. Detached ideas only, happening to find a new idea to associate with, will emerge from the dark for a moment, to sink back into the dark the next moment. Thus man is a stranger to his own mind, in which he gropes in the dark, trusting to his syllogisms to guide him, and often forgetting the best of his treasures, which happen to lie out of his way concealed by the darkness which covers the regions of the human spirit. In the moment of death, however, when eternal night sinks down on his bodily eyes, a new day will break upon his spirit; the centre of the inner man will kindle into a sun, which sheds its radiance over all his spir-

itual stores, and at the same time penetrates into and looks through them as an inward eye of unearthly keenness. All that he had forgotten here, he will find again there; he only forgot it because it went to the hereafter before him, where he finds it all gathered up for him, in a new and universal light, which saves him the trouble of collecting what he wants to associate, and dividing what he wants to separate. At a glance he will be able to survey all that is in him, his various ideas in their relations of agreement and contradiction, of connection and separation — not confined to one particular direction of his thoughts, but looking into every direction at once. There are instances of persons approaching such a state of inward illumination, even in this life, in cases of approaching death, as by drowning, or in somnambulism, or narcosis, and such like.

As high as the flight and sight of a bird mount above the lowly path of the blind crawling caterpillar, that knows of nothing but what it touches in its slow movements,

so far will that higher state of knowledge surpass our present state. So that in death not only our body, but our senses, our intellect, the whole constitution of our mind, must be cast off, as forms too narrow for our life hereafter, as useless members for a new order of things, where everything that we could approach and investigate but slowly and imperfectly with such earthly organs, will be immediately within ourselves, for us to look through, to know, and to enjoy. Every man's own self, however, in the middle of that dissolution of temporary forms, will remain unimpaired in its whole extent and development, and there will be for him a new and higher life instead of the inferior kind of activity which has been extinguished. The turmoil of thoughts is hushed; they need no longer come and go, and move about, to become conscious of their relation to each other. The present intercourse of thoughts, will give way to a higher intercourse, between spirits and spirits. And as the intercourse of human thoughts takes place in a human spirit, so the intercourse

and communion of spirits will take place in that higher spirit whose all-connecting centre we call God. For them no language is required to understand, no eye to see and recognize each other. Just as one thought of ours understands and influences another without the mediation of mouth, ear, or hand; as thoughts meet and part without an outward link or separation; so secret, close, and immediate will the communion of spirits be. There is nothing those spirits will be able to conceal from each other; every sinful thought that lurked here in some dark corner of the mind, everything a man would like to cover up from his fellow-men with a thousand hands, will lie clear and open to every spirit. Only those spirits, therefore, that were all pure and true in this life, will be able to meet other spirits unashamed hereafter; and those that were set aside and misjudged here will be understood and appreciated hereafter. Again, every spirit will with a self-penetrating eye perceive all his own defects, all he left unfinished, imperfect, and discordant within

himself here, and perceiving these defects will feel them with the same keenness of sensation with which we feel our bodily defects. And as in the human mind one thought may help to free the other from all that is deficient in it, and as they associate into higher thoughts, supplying in this wise what is imperfect in each of them: just so the communion of spirits will serve them as a means of progress towards perfection.

CHAPTER VIII.

MAN'S relations with nature, in this life, are of a material as well as of a spiritual kind. Heat, air, water, earth enter into and issue from him in every direction, forming and changing his body. Around him, they move side by side, within him they meet and combine, and in their combination make up a frame, which shuts off his bodily sensations and whatever there is still deeper than these within him, from immediate contact with the outer world. Thus he looks and feels into the outer world through the windows of his senses, and draws fragmentary knowledge out of it as in little buckets.

After his death, however, when his bodily frame sinks into decay, the spirit, fettered and encumbered no longer, will roam throughout nature in unbound liberty.

Then he will feel the waves of light and sound not only as they strike his eyes and ears, but as they glide along in the oceans of air and of ether; he will feel not only the breathing of the wind and the heaving of the sea against his body bathing in them, but float along through air and sea himself; he will no longer walk among verdant trees and fragrant meadows, but consciously pervade the fields, and forests, and men as they walk about them.

Thus, what he loses in passing to a higher stage of life are nothing but organs the imperfect aid of which he can gladly dispense with in a state of existence where he shall feel, and perfectly and actually take in, everything that, on a lower stage, lay outside his own self and could not be approached but by such slow mediation. Why should we take our eyes and ears with us into the life to come, to draw in light and sound from living nature's well, when the waves of that future life shall move in harmony and union with the very waves of light and sound? Nay more: The human

eye, though kindred to the sun, is but a tiny thing, perceiving of the glory of the skies but little sparkling dots. Man's longing to know more of the heavens is not gratified in this life. Though he invent telescopes to enlarge the power and capacity of his eyes, it is in vain — the stars are only so many dots for him. So he hopes to attain in the life to come what his present life cannot afford him, he trusts to have his longings satisfied when he shall go to heaven, and to see, henceforth, distinctly everything that was hidden from his earthly sight. And he is right in hoping so, though he shall not receive wings to go to heaven and fly from star to star with, or from the heavens visible above us to higher heavens yet unseen; there are no such wings in the nature of things. Nor is he to see the heavens in being carried from one star to another in a succession of new births; there is no stork to carry babies from star to star. Nor will his eye receive more visual power to penetrate into the farthest distances of heaven, by being turned into the largest

kind of telescope; the principle of our earthly vision would prove insufficient there. When, as a conscious part of the great celestial body that carries and holds him — the Earth — he consciously partakes in the intercourse, through light, between this and other heavenly beings: then shall he see his longing gratified.

What, a new kind of sight? Well, it would not be fit for men below, just as our present sight would not suffice for the heavens above.¹ Through heavenly space the Earth floats along, an enormous eye, immersed in an ocean of the light which proceeds from numberless stars, and wheeling round and round to receive, on all sides, the impact of its waves, which cross and cross again, a million of times, without ever disturbing each other. It is with that eye man shall one day learn to see, meeting with the spreading waves of his future life the outward waves of the surrounding ether,

¹ Lest this assumption, apparently involving serious difficulties, might be considered thoughtless, I shall more fully explain the meaning of it in an appendix.

and undisturbed by the encountering waves, penetrating, with its most subtle vibrations, into the depths of heaven.

Learn to see, indeed! A great many things man will have to learn after his death. For you must not expect that you shall take in, on your very entrance into it, the whole splendor of heaven, which is in store for the life to come. Even here a child must learn to see and hear; what it sees and hears in the beginning are sights and sounds meaningless for it, dazzling, stunning, confusing. The same will be the case, in the life to come, with what is offered to the new senses of the new child. Only what man takes away with him of this life, the remembrance of all he has done, thought, and been here, he will see clearly and distinctly within him, as soon as he enters that new life: though this will primarily leave him very much the same man he has been. And you may be sure that the foolish, the idle, the wicked shall profit by the glory of the hereafter only so far as they are made to see the discord of their

lives, and are compelled, in the end, to give up their old evil ways. Even for his present life man has received an eye to see all the marvels of heaven and earth, an ear to drink in the sounds of music and of human speech, an understanding to grasp the meaning of all these things — yet, what is the use of eye, ear, or mind to the foolish, the idle, the wicked?

The best and highest things of the life to come, as well as of the present life, are only for the best and highest men, who alone understand, appreciate, and help to produce, them. Thus only the higher class of spirits will be enabled to understand, and take an active part in, the conscious intercourse of the celestial being that carries them with other beings of the “company of heaven.”

Whether, after æons of years, this earth of ours, revolving round the sun in closer and closer orbits, shall return to the womb whence it issued, for a new, solar life to begin for all earthly creatures — who knows? And would it behoove us to know, at present?

CHAPTER IX.

THE spirits of the third stage will dwell in the regions of this Earth, whereof mankind itself forms a part, as in a common body, and all the processes in nature will be to them the same as the processes in our bodies are to us at present. Their body will enclose the bodies of the second stage of life as a common mother, just as the bodies of the second stage enclose those of the first. But a spirit of the third stage has for his own share the common body which he contributed to form and develop during his earthly life. Whatever in this world has become, through the existence of a certain human being, different from what it would have been without him, helps to constitute his new existence, grown out of the common root of all existence, and made up, partly of solid institutions

and works, partly of moving and spreading effects, similarly to the way our present body is made up of solid material, and of changeable material kept together by the solid.

Now, as the spheres of existence wherein the lives of higher spirits move must necessarily intersect, the question arises how is it possible for such numberless spheres to cross and recross each other without disturbing and confusing each other. But you may as well ask how it is possible for numberless water waves to cross in the same lake, for numberless air waves to cross in the same atmosphere, for numberless waves of light to cross in the same ether, for numberless waves of memory to cross in the same brain, for numberless spheres of human lives — the germs and substructions of their after-lives — to cross in this world without disturbing and confusing each other. On the contrary, they only produce a movement and life, of a higher order, of those waves, those memories, those lives of the second, and also of the third stage.

But what is there that keeps those cross-

ing spheres of consciousness asunder? Nothing is there to keep them asunder in any particular points of coincidence, for they all have their points in common, though they belong to each of them in a different manner: this is what separates them and distinguishes them as individuals. Or would you ask what there is to distinguish or separate the intersecting wave circles? You are able to distinguish them outwardly, though they are all alike; and it must be much easier for spheres of consciousness to distinguish each other and themselves inwardly.

When you get a letter from India or Australia having its pages crossed with writing in different directions, how do you manage to distinguish the two sets of lines? Simply by the inner connection of each set. Now, the world may be compared to such a sheet crossed with divers sets of writing, in ever so many directions, every set reading itself as it stands by itself, and reading as well the other sets by which it is crossed.

But that letter is only a very inadequate symbol of the world.

How, then, can consciousness remain one, when spread over such an extended space? Is there not the law about "the Threshold of Consciousness"?¹ You may as well ask how can it remain one in the more limited space of your body, of which that more extended space is only a continuation. Your body, your brain, are they mere points? Or is there one particular point in them, the seat of the soul? There is no such point. The nature of your soul at present is to

¹ This empirical law of the reciprocity of body and mind states, that consciousness is extinguished whenever the bodily activity on which it depends, sinks below a certain degree of strength, called the Threshold. The more extended this activity, the more it will be weakened, and the more easily it will sink below the threshold. There is such a threshold for our consciousness as a whole — the limit between sleeping and waking — and a particular one for every particular sphere of the mind. Hence, in the waking state, the one or the other idea will rise up or sink in our mind, according as the particular activity on which it depends rises above, or sinks below, its respective threshold.

maintain the connection between all the parts of your small body; hereafter it will be, to maintain the more extensive connection of all the parts of your larger body. The spirit of God maintains the connection of the whole Universe, and would you look for God in a point? And one day you shall more fully partake of His ubiquity.

Or, if you are afraid that the waves of your future life may be too extended to rise to the threshold which they reach and overstep in this life, you ought to consider that, far from spreading into an empty world where they would indeed sink into an abyss, they spread into a world, which, as the eternal foundation of the spirit of God, will be a foundation of yours as well: for it is only as supported by and enclosed in the divine life that any creature can live.

The little wren, carried on the eagle's back, can easily soar above the mountain tops, which she could never do for herself; she can even fly a little higher, above the eagle's back where she rested. But both eagle and wren remain in the care of God.

Another question arises — how, after death, we shall be able to exist without our brain, that wonderful structure which at present supports all our mental activity, developing itself in the same measure as that activity grows and develops itself — was it given to us for no purpose? It would be the same question, how the plant can exist without the seed out of which it bursts forth into life, and grows into light: the seed, another such wonderful structure, developing itself more and more through its own vitality; was that seed made for no purpose?

Now you ask, is there, in all the world around us, another structure as wonderful as the human brain, that might take its place in after-life, or is there any structure even superior to it: for the life to come will no doubt be superior to the present life. But is not your body, as a whole, a larger and grander structure than your eye, your ear, your brain, or any of its parts? And again the world of which mankind, with their commonwealths, their sciences, arts,

and commerce form only a part, is in the same degree, nay in an unspeakably higher degree, superior to your little brain, which is only a part or particle of that part. To gain a higher view of the subject, you must not take the earth for a mere ball of land and water and air; the earth is indeed a larger and higher individual creature than yourself, a heavenly being, with a more wonderful living and moving on its surface than you carry about in your own little brain, contributing thereby your own small share to the earth life. It is vain for you to dream of a life to come, if you fail to recognize the life around you.

What does the anatomist see in a man's brain? It is to him a labyrinth of whitish filaments, the meaning of which he cannot read. And what does the brain see in itself? A world of light, and sound, and thoughts, associations, fancies, emotions of love and hatred. This will help you to realize the difference between that which you see of the world, looking at it from the outside, and that which the world sees with-

in itself. Then you will no longer expect that in the world as a whole the inside and the outside ought to resemble one another more than in the case of yourself, as a part of the world. And only because you are a part of the world you are enabled to see within yourself a part of that which the world sees in itself.

Finally, you may ask what it is that in after-life, and not till then, wakens our larger body, so to speak. For that body exists at present, growing and spreading into the outer world as a continuation of our present narrow body. Well, it wakens from the very fact that this narrow body falls asleep, or rather decays. It is only an instance of the universal rule, which prevails throughout this present life, whence we conclude that it will continue hereafter. In your sceptic way, you insist on drawing all your conclusions from this life; so you ought to draw this one also.

Conscious energy is in fact never produced afresh, nor can it be absolutely destroyed. Similar to the body with which

it is connected, it may change its place, form, and activity, in time and space. When it sinks to-day in one place, it will rise in another place to-morrow. That your eye may be awake, may see consciously, your ear must go to sleep for a while; that your mental activity may be roused, your senses must sleep for a while; a feeling of pain in some minute part of your body may for a time extinguish all your consciousness. When directed to a large range of subjects at once, the light of attention will necessarily shine but feebly on the details; when it is concentrated on one point, all the rest will recede into darkness; to reflect on something is to abstract from other things. You are awake to-day because you slept yesterday, and the more active you have been in waking, the sounder will be your sleep.

Now, in this life, our sleep, in a certain sense, is only half-sleep, allowing the old man to waken again, because the old man is still here; in death our sleep will be full sleep, out of which shall waken a new man,

for the old man is not: but the old rule holds good again, which demands an equivalent of your former consciousness; and as there is a new body instead of the old one, being a continuation of the same, so there will be a new consciousness, as an equivalent and continuation of the old one.

A continuation, I say; for whatever preserves, in the old man, the consciousness that dwelled in the body of the child, though there is not an atom of it left in his body, will preserve, in his future life, the same consciousness that dwelled in the body of the old man, of which not an atom will be left in the new body. For in either case the new body preserves the effects of the former body, the organ of his former consciousness, and is itself the outgrowth of it. Thus there is one principle for the continuation of our present life, from this day to the morrow, and for the continuation of the present life into the life to come. And could there be any principle but an eternal one for the eternal continuation of human life?

As little need you ask, how it is that the effects produced by you in this world, which have spread around and beyond yourself, belong to you more properly and more closely than any other effects lying beyond your sphere. The reason for this is in their origin from you. Every cause retains its effects as an eternal property. And, after all, your acts never went beyond you; even in this life, they formed an unconscious continuation of yourself, only waiting to be wakened to new consciousness.

As little as a man, when once alive, can ever die again, as little could he have wakened into life had he not been alive before; only he was not alive individually. The consciousness which awakens in a child at its birth is only a part of the eternal and universal consciousness concentrated in this new soul. To follow this living power of consciousness through all its ways and changes involves no greater difficulty than following the living power of the body.

Perhaps you are afraid that human consciousness, being born of the universal con-

sciousness, may be again absorbed into the same. Behold the tree! What a time it took for the stem to grow branches; but once here they cannot be swallowed up into the stem again, else the tree could not grow and develop itself: but the tree of universal life must grow and develop itself as well.

After all, to draw any conclusion from this life about the hereafter, we must not take our stand on unknown causes or self-made premises; but on known facts, from whence to proceed to the greater and higher facts of after-life, and thus to strengthen and support our belief from below, in addition to higher arguments, and vitally to connect this belief with practical life. If we did not need this faith, we should require no support for it; but what would be its use without such support?

CHAPTER X.

THE human soul is spread throughout the body; when the soul departs the body decays. But the consciousness of the soul is in different places at different times.¹ You may watch it wandering about in our narrow body, now corresponding with the eye, now with the ear, with the outer and inner senses. In death, it will wander beyond our body, like a man who, having had his little house destroyed where-

¹ Or, to express it more exactly, consciousness is present and awake when and where the activity of the body underlying the activity of the mind—the psycho-physical activity—exceeds that degree of strength which we call the threshold. According to this view, consciousness can be localized in time and space. The summits of the waves of our psycho-physical activity move and change about from place to place, though confined, in this life, to our body, even to a limited part of our body, and in sleep they sink below the threshold to rise again in waking.

in he moved about for years, leaves it for ever to wander to distant countries. Death separates our two lives only so far as it takes us from the narrow scene of our wanderings to a wider one. Now, in this life consciousness cannot be in every place at once; the same in after-life. But the range of its wanderings will be incomparably wider, with freer roads, with higher points of view, embracing all the lower ones of the present life.

Even in this life it may happen, though very rarely, that the light of consciousness wanders from the narrow body into the larger body, and returning home gives information about things which are taking place far away in space, or things which, springing from present circumstances, will take place in some future time: for the length of the future rests on the breadth of the present. Sometimes a little rift will open, and quickly close again, in the otherwise closed door between this world and the next, the door which only death shall open for ever and aye. Nor is it well for us to

peep through those rifts before the time. But such exceptions to the rule of our present life are still in harmony with the greater rule which embraces both this life and the life hereafter.

Sometimes the narrower body will fall asleep to a certain extent, in an uncommon way, waking in a no less uncommon way, in another direction, beyond its usual limits, though not so completely as to awaken no more. Or, some part of our larger body is impressed with such uncommon intensity as to draw our consciousness, for a while, away from our narrower body, to rise above the threshold in an unusual place. Hence the wonders of clairvoyance, of presentiments, and dreams — mere fables, if our future body and our future life are fables, otherwise signs of the one and predictions of the other: and if a thing has its signs, it must exist; if it has predictions, it will come.

However, all those things are no signs of a healthy life. For in this life we have only to build up our bodies for the hereafter, not to see or hear with the eyes and ears of the

hereafter. A flower when opened before its time will not thrive. And though our belief in a life to come may be supported by such occasional glances caught in this life, it must not take its foundation on them. A sound and healthy belief is founded on arguments, and it reaches to the highest points of view of a healthy life, being itself essential to the health and integrity of such a life.

Did you take the faint image in which a dead person appears in your memory for a mere inward semblance? If so, you are mistaken; it is more than that, it is your friend's own self, consciously coming, not only near you, but into you. His former shape is still the garment of his soul, though no longer encumbered with his former solid body and wandering slowly along with him, but transparent and light, free from earthly burdens, changing its place in a moment, at the call of every person who thinks of him, or even entering into your mind of his own accord, thus causing you to remember him who is dead. The old idea, so generally

adopted, of the souls of the dead as light, bodiless, unbounded by space, is quite a correct view of the subject, without earnestly meaning to be so.

You have also heard of ghosts appearing — what the doctors call phantasms or hallucinations. They are indeed hallucinations of the living, but, at the same time, real manifestations of the dead. The faint images in our memory are such manifestations, those vivid apparitions are only the more so. It is no use worrying whether they be one thing or the other, for they are really both things at a time. And as you are not frightened by the images within you, being present manifestations of spirits, you need no more be frightened by the apparitions before you. Though, after all, in a certain sense, there is reason for being frightened. The images of the memory are either called up by yourself, or they come, quietly and peacefully, in the course of your inner life, as helps to its development; the other class of manifestations come unbidden, too strong to be kept back, standing before you it

seems, but, in reality, standing within you, not to help, but rather to disturb the working of your inner life; such a presence is an abnormal one, belonging at the same time to this life and the next. The dead and the living ought not to hold intercourse in this way. To see dead persons almost as distinctly and objectively as spirits see each other, is almost death to the living; hence the fright of the living caused by their presence. And as, in those cases, the dead return half-way from the realms beyond the grave to the land this side the grave, popular belief—not an unfounded belief, perhaps—will have it that only those spirits walk about here that are not released yet, but still earth-bound with a heavy chain. To drive away the unblessed spirit, call for the help of a better and mightier one; but the best and the mightiest is the one Spirit above all spirits. In His protection, what can harm you? Popular belief agrees in this that evil spirits will vanish when the name of God is called upon.

There is, however, in this matter great

danger of belief degenerating into superstition. The simplest means, after all, of keeping ghosts away is, not to believe in their coming. For believing that they may come is going half-way to meet them.

“Spirits see each other,” I said just now. I argue that such appearance, which is contrary to the order of things at present, is only anticipated from the order of things to come. Clearly, distinctly, objectively, the inhabitants of the hereafter will see each other, in the same shape of which we in this life preserve but a faint likeness, a dim contour, in our memory. For they interpenetrate each other with their whole nature, of which a small portion only enters our minds when we remember them. In order to attract them, it will be necessary to direct one’s attention towards them, in after-life as well as at present.

Now you may ask, How is it possible for those that interpenetrate each other to appear to each other objectively, in a distinct shape? You may as well ask, How is it possible that that something which, in your

brain, produces the idea of a living person, or the memory of a dead person (and this is all you have to base it upon), appears to you as an outward object, a definite recollection. The effects that produce your recollection have no distinct shape themselves, yet they bring before you the distinct outlines of the person from whom they originally proceeded. You cannot tell why it is so, in this life; how can you expect to know more of the hereafter?

Thus, I say again, do not draw inferences from supposed present causes unknown to you, nor from premises of your own invention; but from present facts known to you and all, to arrive at the greater and higher facts of the hereafter. Any single inference may be erroneous, so you must not stick to all the particulars; but the accordance of all the different inferences, pointing towards that which is before and above all inference, will be the best support for our belief from below, and the best guide to the regions above. But if, from the beginning, you would take your footing above, the

whole path of belief which is to lead you upward might slip from under your feet.

CHAPTER XI.

THERE would be no more difficulties for our belief, could we only make up our minds to take the word that has been a fine saying for more than a thousand years, that “in God we live, and move, and have our being,” for more than a word, or rhetorical phrase. In that case our belief in God and in our own eternal life would be one; we should then look upon our own life as part of God’s eternal life, and should consider the height of our future life above this present life as a higher step within God, from that lower step where we are placed in Him now; a better insight into the things below would enable us better to comprehend higher things, and from their mutual connection we should comprehend the great whole of which we only form a part.

When your perceptions are gone out of

your consciousness, recollections will rise out of them. Thus your whole earthly *life of perceptions* in God will be gone one day, but a higher *life of recollections* in God will have risen out of it; and as your recollections move and associate within your head, the spirits of the hereafter move and associate within the Divine head. It is only one step higher on the same ladder, which does not lead *to* God, but higher up *in* God, who holds within Himself top and bottom of that ladder. How empty must God appear to those who take the above-mentioned text for an empty sound; how full is God through the full significance of those words!

Do you pretend to know how, in your present stage, a life of perceptions is possible in your mind? You know nothing but that there is such a life, which, being a spiritual life, is only possible in a spirit. So there can be no difficulty for you to believe — although you know not how it is possible — that there will be a life hereafter, of your whole spirit in a higher spirit;

if you only believe that there is a higher Spirit, and yourself in Him.

And again, there would be no more difficulties for our belief, if we could make up our minds to take for true that other word, that in everything God liveth, and moveth, and hath His being. Then there would be no dead world for us, but a living world, out of which every human being builds up his own future body, as a new house built up within the house of God.

When, oh when will that life-giving faith become alive among us? The fact that it is a life-giving faith shall make it alive.

CHAPTER XII.

YOUR question was, *whether* it would be; my answer is *how* it will be.

Faith renders your question as to the Whether unnecessary; but if the question is asked, there is that one answer as to the How. And as long as that How has not been settled, the Whether will not cease to come and go.

Here is the tree; let one or the other of its leaves drop away, if only its root be struck deeply and firmly in the ground: new branches and new leaves will grow and drop away again, but the tree will stand and bring forth blossoms of beauty, and instead of taking its root in faith, bear fruits of faith.

APPENDIX I.

ON THE PRINCIPLE OF HEAVENLY VISION.

VISION may be produced on several principles. If an opaque screen were placed in front of the retina with only a tiny opening in it, we could see through that opening, as every luminous point of the outer world would send a slender ray of light through it, and the rays crossing in the opening would produce an image, inverted, on the retina. But such vision by means of slender rays would be rather dim; that is not the way in which we see on earth. By another principle a transparent lens is placed in front of the retina which concentrates the whole cone of light emitted from every luminous point of the outer world, into a spot of the retina. This

makes vision much more distinct; and this is the actual principle of earthly vision, or rather of the external process of it; it does not explain the real act of seeing. For the soul does not see immediately the points of the image on the retina; vision, as a mental act, is produced by the vibrations propagated into the brain, the different vibrations proceeding from one point being felt in one: whatever proceeds from a common source is perceived as one in the soul, though we cannot tell how a complex process in space is condensed into a simple perception in the mind. It is, after all, natural enough for one and the same thing to afford a different appearance when seen from different points of view — an inner or an outer one — and it is a general experience concerning the connection between body and soul that a simple psychic act is based on a physical complex, or, that the physically complicated is psychically concentrated into something simple and one in itself. Vision may be explained through this law, and could hardly be ex-

plained differently, from the impossibility of proving a simple seat of the soul.

Now, a third principle of vision may be conceived, viz., the principle of interpenetration of the psycho-physical emanations (i. e. physical processes producing psychical effects) of two opposite points, the perception of either point being produced in the other immediately, by uniting those various emanations in one. And what holds good for two separate points, would do for two separate systems of points. This would be the most perfect vision, the points of the objects appearing to each other immediately and in their full intensity, in proportion with the power produced by the interpenetrating emanations, whereas in our earthly vision it is not the points of the objects that are seen, only their images on the retina.

I imagine that there could be a mode of vision on this principle. The emanations of celestial bodies, meeting each other in space, do indeed correspond to it, supposing that luminary vibrations, or concomitant vibrations of a higher order, may be consid-

ered as psycho-physical movements (which supposition is nowise contrary to experience). There has indeed always been an inclination to connect our own mental life with movements of imponderable substance; nor can there be anything to prevent our connecting such movements in the outer world with a mental life of a higher order. Even our human eye would not exactly require a lens in front of the retina to receive point-shaped impressions from outward points, if the retina itself, and each successive stratum of it, which now intercept outward emanations on their way to our psycho-physical system, should offer a surface of sensitive points to receive, and meet with their own emanations, directly and without any check or hindrance, the impression of the outward vibrations: as in the case of the luminary emanations of stars.

What, then, is the use of earthly eyes? It is this that in their connection with our other senses, they help to form organs for effects of a higher order, organs which we call Men, who in their turn are connected,

and united into an organism of a higher order than man, which we call Earth!

New vibrations go forth, no doubt, from the central points in which the fibres of the optic nerve terminate in the brain, vibrations propagated through the fibres between those points, and producing, where they meet, through the total of impressions caused by the single points, the perceptions of real objects: in the same way we may assume the perceptions of all the heavenly beings to be embraced in a higher Divine perception.

Two naked men are evidently under the same outward conditions, reciprocally, as two stars; however, they do not see each other with their skins; for the psycho-physical system of man is inside him, closed up behind his skin, whereas that of the Earth is spread out over its surface, having its ultimate ramifications in the human beings that live on that surface. Now, there is one place in the skin affording an entrance to our psycho-physical system, namely, the eye, whereby men do indeed see each other.

The rest of the emanations which they interchange, spread beyond them into the greater psycho-physical system, without affecting their own respective consciousness.

I do not say that every point in this theory is well established, but I hope I have given a right idea of a right principle. It is no demonstration, it is only a remark, which I hope will prove the germ, still half-buried in darkness, to a great luminous world-conception. My speculations, as laid down in this last and in the foregoing chapters, will become better established on larger and firmer grounds, and will be more generally adopted, when the science of psychophysics, now only in its infancy, shall see its object not in an isolated theory of the relations between body and mind in the particular human and animal organisms, but in a universal theory of the relations between the mental and the material principles of the universe. Such a time, of which this purports to be a harbinger, shall come. To the materialist and the idealist my views must at present appear foolishness, just as the

materialism and idealism of our days will one day appear foolishness in their turn.

APPENDIX II.

THE following passages contained in the first Edition in the places here referred to, were suppressed by the Author in the later editions.

(Page 70, after line 14.) It ought, however, to be remembered that though in the third stage the spirit of man may rise towards God, the third stage is not the highest attainable. In that stage the spirit of man, having passed through this life, will more fully comprehend the working of God in the life of the earth. However, God manifests himself in still higher stages of life, which we are in the habit of vaguely describing as the heavens. To them man aspires during the third stage, preparing himself to live there in a succeeding stage. Nothing in the life of the earth will be concealed from man while in the third stage.

The greatest spirits of that stage will by God's appointment be governors of the earth. But into that higher life, beyond the earth, man will have to be born through a second death.

(Page 82, line 19.) This earth of ours, of which mankind forms a part, is to the spirits of the third stage a common body, and all the processes of nature are to them what the processes of our own body are to us. Their body encloses the bodies of the second stage, as the bodies of the second stage enclose those of the first. Each lower sphere of life is enclosed in a higher sphere, into which it is one day to open. The one grows in and through the other, by means, as it were, of nerves connecting the two. But there is no connection of consciousness between the two. No sphere of life is clearly aware of the greater sphere which encloses it, and which it is one day to occupy. Thus man in his present stage is like the seed growing and developing itself as part of the plant, without knowing about the light-life of the plant, which shall one day

be its own life, when in death it has left its mother-plant.

(Page 85, line 20, after the colon.) The earth, the body of the spirits of the third stage, is self-contained, but connected with a greater body, the Sun, by the emanating light and the general gravitation — as the child is connected with its mother's body by the navel-string, receiving through it its impulses of life. And as the embryo, while connected with its mother, goes on growing and unfolding itself, till in its first birth it passes into the mother's own sphere of life, and as man, after his birth, while connected with the earth, goes on growing and unfolding himself, till in death he shall pass into the earth's own sphere of life, so the spirits of the third stage, being connected with the sun, will go on unfolding themselves, till on the fourth stage they shall pass into the sun's life. In this way man, having gone through his round of the three stages of earth-life, is to begin a new round in a higher world — another celestial body — so that the highest stage of his earth-life is like

an embryo-state for the lowest stage of that higher-world life. And so the earth may be compared to an egg, from which the sun breeds spirits, that they may rise to the sun on wings of light.

In their stage of sun-life the spirits, by means of light and gravitation, will see and feel through space, and commune with planets and suns, as far as light and gravitation reach. Their common light-sense will enable the sun's inhabitants to survey at a glance the varieties of life and motion in all the planets as clearly as we now survey our nearest surroundings; and so, though born on one individual planet out of the many, we shall know them all without having to pass a lifetime on each of them. The spirits who, while living on several planets, remained strangers to each other, will meet on the sun, in the same sphere of life, whence each of them may look back upon the scene of his own former life as well as on the scenes of evolution of all the rest. And in a succeeding stage the spirits of the individual sun will be born into the vast ocean

of suns, which knows of no bounds but boundlessness. And in a still higher stage they will reach the eternal source of space and time, itself independent of space and time — and finally even they will outgrow all space and time, being received into God's everlasting glory.

Chapter IX (conclusion). Therefore be ye of good courage in your outlook beyond the grave; do not heed the sayings of ignorance, proclaiming that in death, when man's body is given back to the dust of the earth, his spirit shall lose itself in the absolute. Of a truth, man shall return to the absolute, though not after his first death, but after his last, and not like the raindrop that is swallowed up in the ocean from which it originally came, but like the butterfly that leaves its caterpillar's skin behind, to move about freely and joyfully in its pure parental element. The last death of man, or of any spirit, is indeed an addition, of a new individual and independent element evolved in and through its various stages of life, to the great Principle of all existence,

undetermined in the beginning of creation, but destined to be determined and evolved by this very addition. The absolute is not a grave-yard for decaying corpses; it is the birth-place of the children of God that have grown into angels, who are as eyes and ears and hands to God, whereby he governs all the lower spheres, down to this present world of ours.

AUTHOR'S POSTSCRIPT TO FIRST EDITION.

THE idea worked out in this little book, that the spirits of the dead continue to exist as individuals in the living, was first suggested to me through a conversation with my friend Professor Billroth,¹ then living in Leipzig, now in Halle. The idea appealing to a series of kindred thoughts lying ready in my own mind, and engendering new ones, finally assumed the present shape, enlarged by a kind of spontaneous

¹ Johann Gustav Friedrich Billroth, born 1808 at Lubeck, died 1836 at Halle, where in 1834 he had been appointed professor of theology. He must not be confused with Theodore Billroth, the famous anatomist. Prof. Billroth's chief work, here alluded to (but, as it seems, undeservedly neglected in our days), was published after his death by Prof. Erdmann, of Halle: *Vorlesungen über Religionsphilosophie*: Leipzig, 1837.

evolution into the idea of a higher life of spirits in God. In the meantime the originator's own way of thinking has taken a different direction from ours, in the philosophy of religion in general, and especially in the doctrine of immortality, so that he seems for the most part, if not entirely, to have abandoned the fundamental idea. Nevertheless, I have felt obliged to mention him as its originator, though I may no longer speak of him as its advocate. As far as I know he will expound his own views on the subject in a philosophical work shortly to appear.

Written at Gastein,
August, 1835.

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